

**FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE, BUREAU OF
POPULATION, REFUGEES AND MIGRATION AND THE OFFICE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
2020-2021**

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I. Introduction

This Framework for Cooperation (the “Framework”) sets forth agreement between the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration at the United States Department of State (hereinafter referred to as “PRM”) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (hereinafter referred to as “UNHCR” or “the Organization”). PRM and UNHCR (the “Participants”) have been working in partnership through a Framework for Cooperation since the year 2000 to provide protection, humanitarian assistance, and facilitate durable solutions for UNHCR’s populations of concern in accordance with its mandate, conferred upon it through its statute¹ and by subsequent General Assembly resolutions on refugees and other persons of concern. PRM and UNHCR have a unique relationship. The United States (herein after referred to as “U.S.”) government, through PRM, remains UNHCR’s top donor, while UNHCR has been PRM’s largest multilateral partner. PRM and UNHCR renew their bilateral Framework for Cooperation biennially to advance shared objectives.

¹ Resolution 428 (V), annex.

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This Framework focuses on setting out shared goals and priorities, oversight and monitoring responsibilities and actions, and details of communications and reporting at an institutional level. It seeks to advance humanitarian reform commitments in line with ongoing larger UN reform efforts.

It is understood that this document, in its entirety, constitutes policy commitments by PRM and UNHCR, and is therefore not legally binding.

II. Shared Goals and Priorities

UNHCR plans for 82.5 million worldwide people of concern, which includes asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees, the internally displaced and stateless persons, by the end of 2020. This number demonstrates the scale of the problem of forced displacement and the urgency of addressing it.

PRM and UNHCR will continue to work together to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Participants' working relationship and strengthen UNHCR's capacity for efficient, effective, and accountable operational delivery, particularly given ongoing UN reform efforts. The Framework is aligned with UNHCR's [Strategic Directions 2017-2021](#), [Global Strategic Priorities \(GSPs\) 2020-2021](#), which includes specific indicators that measure and report on UNHCR's overall achievements on these priorities, the [Global Compact on Refugees](#), and PRM's 2020-2022 Functional Bureau Strategy. It is guided by the priorities of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee. PRM will continue to support UNHCR's efforts to protect and respond flexibly, transparently, and efficiently to the needs of its persons of concern. As UNHCR's largest humanitarian donor, PRM expects at a minimum that UNHCR is able to convey humanitarian priorities based on need, demonstrate that significant efficiencies have been made in the management of operations to meet those needs, and provide performance data to show the impact of UNHCR's work. Ensuring accountability of UNHCR is a priority for PRM. This includes meeting or exceeding Grand Bargain commitments; fully integrating the various reform initiatives UNHCR is undertaking and demonstrating their impact; demonstrating how funding received is spent, including ensuring that quality aid is delivered with the funds provided through data-driven decision-making; and maintaining a strong risk management system.

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 has had an adverse effect on displaced persons globally, and has significantly impacted the way that UNHCR works, including through limits on workforce mobility and the onset of new protection concerns faced by refugees, IDPs, asylum-seekers and stateless persons worldwide. UNHCR is committed to "staying and delivering" for its persons of concern and will work together with PRM as both Participants adapt to the dynamic and evolving humanitarian environment globally.

A. Protection

Protection is at the core of PRM and UNHCR's humanitarian mission. UNHCR's strong leadership in the protection of asylum seekers, refugees, IDPs, and stateless persons, as well as sharing and upholding protection principles and standards for these populations, is central to PRM's support for the Organization. It is especially important to integrate protection for vulnerable populations with special needs into assistance programs and reinforce these efforts. It is also important that UNHCR provide needs-based protection and assistance to its

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persons of concern. PRM expects UNHCR to provide to PRM analytical reports with data showing trends in UNHCR performance on the following objectives:

- Safeguard access to territorial protection and asylum procedures; provide protection against *refoulement*; support the adoption of nationality laws that prevent and/or reduce statelessness; and secure birth registration and individual documentation based on registration (Source Data: GSP yearly progress reports; Global Report).
- Reduce protection risks faced by persons of concern, particularly discrimination, gender-based violence, and specific risks faced by children (Source Data: GSP yearly progress reports; Global Report; Governance reports; PRM-funded special projects: *Safe from the Start* and Child Protection reports).
- Ensure a holistic, efficient, and effective response in non-camp and protracted situations (Source Data: Global Report; Governance reports; Country Operations Plans).
- Strengthen UNHCR engagement with IDPs, which leads to an Organization that is more decisive, predictable, consistent, effective, and automatized in its engagement with IDPs. The [Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement](#) requires UNHCR country, regional and global operations to mobilize and deploy resources and capacities in support of UNHCR's longstanding pledge to work in partnership with others to strengthen protection and secure solutions for IDPs. In line with [UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2017-2021](#), it commits UNHCR to leveraging fully the synergies between the Organization's engagement with refugees, internally displaced people, returnees, stateless people and others affected by humanitarian crises, while taking into account UNHCR's varied responsibilities vis-à-vis different categories of forcibly displaced people, and relevant interagency arrangements. It also commits UNHCR to progressively adjusting internal systems and processes to enable the Organization to work seamlessly and effectively across the full spectrum of forced displacement, which is further detailed in UNHCR's [2020-2021 Initiative on Internal Displacement](#) (Source Data: Global Report; Governance reports).
- Work to ensure that refugees residing in any one country receive assistance according to their stated needs, and that UNHCR intervenes in an equitable, needs-based way. (Source Data: Global Appeal; Global Report).
- Follow-through on the actions agreed with NGO partners during the March 2020 consultations on protection practices and field practice related to data sharing of protection case management data, including guidance to UNHCR and partner personnel and on escalation pathways (Source Data: NGO reporting).

B. Accountability to Affected Populations

PRM and UNHCR will work together to continue to support UNHCR's efforts to achieve minimum standards of assistance and lasting solutions for its persons of concern, taking into account necessary measures to support affected and hosting communities. Among these efforts, PRM encourages UNHCR to report data to PRM on the following objectives:

- Reduce mortality, morbidity, and malnutrition among persons of concern through multi-sectoral interventions with a particular focus on prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) and under-5 mortality rate (Source Data: GSP yearly progress reports; UNHCR bilateral reporting on GAM and U5M; Global Report). Of note,

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UNHCR currently recommends that GAM surveys occur annually when the nutrition situation in a particular site is evolving and severe; given the high financial and human resource costs associated with conducting such surveys, UNHCR cannot guarantee that annual reporting will be consistent across locations if financial constraints force operations to prioritize other aspects of implementation over surveys. Where yearly survey data is available UNHCR will provide trend analysis. Furthermore, UNHCR continues to monitor health indicators through a number of means, and will year-on-year information on camp populations where the health information system is in place and yearly data is available.

- Strengthen its commitments to refugee women and girls and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) through the implementation of its [Age, Gender and Diversity Policy](#), which includes a global implementation and monitoring plan. As UNHCR issues guidance on prevention, mitigation, and response to child early and forced marriage (CEFM), that it ensures strong tie-ins with its M&E systems to ensure better outcomes for girls at risk of CEFM (Source Data: UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Accountability Report, UNHCR child protection guidance).
- Regularly collect, analyze, and use feedback obtained directly from persons of concern to affect the quality and relevance of UNHCR's assistance. UNHCR will seek and consider such feedback in program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as in its budget planning and prioritization, review, and re-prioritization. Further, UNHCR will provide feedback on such decisions directly to the affected population, ensuring transparency through communication, in line with its AAP work. (Source Data: UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Accountability Report).
- Expand the number of countries resettling refugees and support the strengthening of other established resettlement programs. PRM will continue to work with UNHCR on maintaining and strengthening the integrity of the resettlement system and that resettlement functions are sufficiently prioritized and resourced within the UNHCR budget (Source Data: Governance reports and Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement reports).

C. Grand Bargain Commitments

PRM and UNHCR reaffirm commitments made through the Grand Bargain to promote greater coherence, efficiency, transparency, and accountability in humanitarian response. The Grand Bargain aims to strengthen how humanitarian assistance efforts are designed, funded, implemented, and evaluated in order to maximize effectiveness and enhance accountability to affected populations. As we approach the five-year anniversary of the Grand Bargain, the United States sees value in maintaining this unique platform while exploring how initiatives under the Grand Bargain can more systematically lead to needed reforms, including localization, cash-based initiatives, reducing management costs, and joint/prioritized needs assessments and analysis, with the aim to maximize the outcomes for the most vulnerable beneficiaries and the value of the taxpayer dollars that fund the response to global humanitarian needs. Both UNHCR and the U.S. Government have made significant strides to meeting their commitments. Both parties commit to build on this, maintain what has already been achieved, and address what remains to be achieved in areas of shared priority:

- UNHCR has succeeded in meeting International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards on the publishing of open data.

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- **Localization:** In 2019, UNHCR allocated \$1.376 billion to over 1,100 partners which included national and international NGOs, governments and UN sister agencies. Of this, \$752.6 million was allocated to local responders, national NGOs and governments combined including \$575 million to 709 national NGOs. UNHCR thus met its Grand Bargain target by transferring 26% of its annual program expenditure to local responders.
- **Increase Use and Coordination of Cash-based Programming:**
 - UNHCR now provides more cash assistance than in-kind and 95% is delivered to UNHCR persons of concern without restrictions so that they can choose how to spend it and meet their own needs. UNHCR has met its Grand Bargain commitment to double the amount of cash assistance.
 - UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, and OCHA have committed to collaborating on cash and voucher assistance, using common systems wherever possible, through the UN Common Cash Statement signed in December 2018. The Statement promotes collaboration on cash transfer mechanisms that maximize efficiency and predictability, ensures effective coordination, leverages the expertise of all partners and maximizes economies of scale. UNHCR also expanded its common cash delivery, notably through the Common Cash Facility (CCF) in Jordan, the Lebanon One Unified Inter-Organization System for E-Cards (LOUISE), the Greece Cash Alliance, and has launched joint procurement in Ecuador. UNHCR will continue to strengthen coordination with other agencies delivering cash assistance and implement the common cash system and objectives outlined in the December 2018 cash statement at the country level.
- **Reducing Duplication and Management Costs:**
 - The use of biometrics in refugee registration continued its expansion, reaching 69 operations in 2019, compared with 62 during 2018. Despite significant operational challenges resulting from the COVID-19 global pandemic, UNHCR is currently using biometrics in 73 operations and on track to meet its target of 75 operations by the end of 2020. Of the existing active caseload registered with UNHCR, approximately 80% have been registered biometrically (Source Data: Yearly Governance reports on the Grand Bargain).
 - UNHCR is collaborating with WFP in the context of a global data-sharing addendum to its MOU in order to improve data flows and efficiencies between the agencies.
 - As co-convener of this workstream, to reduce duplication and the costs of procurement and logistics, UNHCR, together with WFP, have been leading the Business Innovation Group in the context of UN reform. This group is working to increase common back offices, global shared service centers, as well as common premises. UNHCR had already reduced the cost of procurement and logistics by 10% in 2019 through the use of shared services with partner agencies, meeting its commitment of 10% by the end of 2020.
- **Improve Joint and Impartial Needs Assessments:**
 - UNHCR participated in 105 joint multi-sectoral assessments in 2019, 59% of which it either led or co-led (representing an increase of 13% in UNHCR-led or co-led JNAs on the 2018 figure). Joint multi-sectoral assessments provide inherent efficiencies, including through enhancing the effectiveness of data collection and analysis, providing more accurate narratives for program planning, and allowing for more focused targeting of beneficiaries for assistance and services. UNHCR will look to further increase its participation in and leadership of joint multi-sectoral assessments in 2020 and 2021.

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- UNHCR and the World Bank Group (WBG) have established the Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC) in Copenhagen, with PRM representing the United States on the Management Committee. The JDC aims to ensure systematic collection and analysis of population and of socio-economic data of forcibly displaced and host communities to strengthen the sustainability of relevant global, national and agency data collection and to facilitate analytical gaps in topics relevant to policy and programming around people affected by forced displacement. UNHCR will contribute to and use the data and analytics derived from the UNHCR-World Bank Joint Data Center's work to inform more targeted responses and engagement with development actors in situations of forced displacement, by strengthening data systems and filling data and data analysis gaps. JDC initiatives include supporting the production of data sets on forcibly displaced populations (goal of 12 by 2023) and supporting the production of a descriptive, prescriptive and predictive studies (goal of 11 total by 2023).
- **Participation Revolution:**
 - In order to ensure equal (50%) and meaningful participation of women and adolescent girls in all decision-making processes and structures, UNHCR adopted a new Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Policy in 2018. As part of its AGD approach, UNHCR has made progress in mainstreaming the inclusion of women and girls in decision-making processes, ensuring individual registration for females, and working to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV). The agency reiterates its commitment to meeting the stated goals in the AGD Policy (Source Data: UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Accountability Report).
 - To demonstrate engagement with and accountability to people and communities affected by crises, UNHCR and PRM will discuss a means for PRM to receive information on how UNHCR keeps beneficiaries informed on how it responds to feedback that UNHCR has obtained directly from beneficiaries on the quality and relevance of assistance provided.

D. Additional Reform Initiatives

Beyond efforts taken in line with the Organization's Grand Bargain commitments, UNHCR is pursuing transformative initiatives designed to better position the Organization to protect and assist populations of concern, work with others to promote solutions, address future challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities, encompassing multiple areas of UNHCR's work across eight pillars including:

- **Decentralization and regionalization:** In 2019, UNHCR initiated a regionalization and decentralization process. Since 2020, the Organization has shifted capacities, authorities and resources closer to the people UNHCR serves within seven new field-based regional bureaus to support protection, inclusion and solutions at the local level.
- **UN reform:** In order to enable the UN to deliver results more effectively and efficiently, the Secretary-General's reform agenda aims to enhance UN performance across all three pillars: peace and security; human rights; and development. UNHCR is actively involved in these efforts, as the reform agenda encompasses coordination, prioritization and program implementation of development activities at the country level.
- **Risk Management 2.0:** UNHCR is working to strengthen the Organization's risk culture, supporting risk-informed decision-making, organizational credibility, and

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renewing accountability to affected populations. Practically, this means embedding risk management in UNHCR operations' management cycles, strengthening the risk management capacity in selected operations, building risk management skills and enhancing risk management frameworks and tools.

E. Global Compact on Refugees

The world is continuing to face an unprecedented level of forced displacement with the humanitarian system stretched to its limits. UNHCR should continue to engage with States and other relevant stakeholders in a new way of working through implementation of the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) and the Global Refugee Forum, to consider opportunities, challenges and ways in which burden- and responsibility-sharing can be enhanced. With governments, NGOs, refugees, other UN agencies, private sector, international financial institutions and civil society, including think tanks, academia and faith leaders, UNHCR should continue to aim to ease pressure on countries that welcome and host refugees, build self-reliance of refugees, expand access to resettlement in third countries and other complementary pathways, and foster conditions that enable refugees to voluntarily to return to their home countries.

- Strengthen relief and development coherence by continued collaboration with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including the World Bank, and other development actors to increase burden sharing and address the medium- and long-term needs of populations of concern. Such efforts will provide additional financing and enable country of origin governments, host governments, and other development actors to make investments to stimulate economic growth, expand educational opportunities, improve the well-being of populations of concern, and alleviate strains on infrastructure and social services. PRM expects UNHCR to strengthen coordination with the World Bank in the development and implementation of World Bank projects benefiting refugees to inform World Bank programming and ensure an adequate protection framework before and during implementation. PRM will continue to coordinate U.S. government assistance with USAID and build linkages between development and humanitarian programs (Source Data: Governance reports and interventions).

F. Human Resources

The U.S. government continues to promote employment of U.S. citizens in the UN, with PRM's UNHCR JPO program cited as a successful example. U.S. citizens represent the largest single nationality in UNHCR international professional staff at 7%, up slightly from 6.9% in 2018. The PRM-supported JPO program fulfills two main objectives: 1) Support for UNHCR's strong leadership and coordination role on protection principles and assistance standards for asylum seekers, refugees, IDPs, and stateless persons by providing U.S.-funded JPO positions; and 2) Support existing JPOs and promote UNHCR hiring of current PRM-supported JPOs to expand opportunities for U.S. citizens to build careers at UNHCR.

PRM aims to support approximately 25 active UNHCR JPOs in 2021 onward, an increase from a goal of 20 positions in 2019. Since 2019, UNHCR's Division of Human Resources (DHR) JPO Unit has run the JPO recruitment and selection process. PRM's role includes: choosing the positions to support, reviewing and approving the terms of reference, review of

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the shortlisted candidates, endorsement of the final selection, shortlisting candidates, and reviewing cost estimates and performance reviews. PRM will continue to use this process.

G. Resource Mobilization, Budgeting & Planning

PRM expects UNHCR to provide transparent information on budget allocation prioritization, fiscal discipline, and the implications of unfunded or under-funded activities. PRM confirms its commitment to remain a strong supporter of UNHCR, while recommending that UNHCR continue to expand resource mobilization efforts and strive for and demonstrate broader-based donor support and seek more equitable burden sharing among donors.

- UNHCR will work to expand its donor base for voluntary contributions, including through increasing its government, private sector, and pooled funds contributions in line with the expanding needs by 3% in 2020 and 2% in 2021. These targets are based on the assumption that UNHCR's budget remains relatively stable in 2020 and 2021 (Source Data: Governance reports; Global Report).
- PRM and UNHCR agree on clearer communication with stakeholders, including donors and implementing partners, of priorities within UNHCR's Annual Program Budget in order to ensure that prioritized activities are fully funded and that UNHCR communicates the impact of underfunding, including for the purpose of increasing burdensharing (Source Data: Global Appeal; governance reports and interventions; PRM COP monitoring).
- UNHCR will strengthen its dialogue with Member States and other stakeholders in the planning and preparation of its Country Operation Plans in its Annual Program Review, recognizing that 2020 will be a "light" process. UNHCR acknowledges the importance of input from key actors at each stage of UNHCR programming and budget formulation. UNHCR will use planning workshops at the country level by involving representatives of beneficiaries, non-governmental organizations, host governments and host community members, and donors at country level. UNHCR will keep Member States fully apprised during the course of the year on any increases or reductions and other significant changes (e.g., in priorities, policies, etc.) to programs and budgets by providing this information no later than 10 days after such changes occur (Source Data: Governance reports; PRM Refugee Coordinator reporting; Global Focus).
- Recognizing the need for early, sufficient, predictable and sustained funding support, PRM will continue to strive to provide flexible and early contributions to UNHCR, and support PRM's "one refugee" policy. UNHCR understands that PRM support depends on funding availability and UNHCR's demonstration of needs and results, including those outlined in this Framework (Source Data: PRM financial reporting and contribution language; Governance reports on UNHCR's change management/reform).
- PRM will continue to provide contributions through its *Reserve Pledge for Emergencies* (also known as the *Emergency Reserve Pledge*) that provides UNHCR with the ability to respond to small-scale emergencies in real-time. UNHCR will report back to PRM as the allocations are made, as well as provide summary information on the allocations of the reserve pledge in September prior to the closure of the U.S. fiscal year and in December prior to the closure of the UNHCR calendar year (Source Data: PRM financial reporting, UNHCR reporting on use of the *Reserve Pledge*).

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H. U.S. Visibility

UNHCR should continue its efforts to raise the profile and visibility of the U.S. as a donor that provides substantial, flexible, relatively unearmarked support for the organization. Deepening public understanding and informed commitment is a part of the global humanitarian response.

- UNHCR should continue to ensure that the PRM-UNHCR Joint Visibility Strategy and its corresponding visibility guidelines are disseminated to all of its field operations and that they are being implemented by reflecting U.S. and other major donor support in the field and in public information tools, particularly when flexible earmarking (e.g., at the regional, sub-regional, or country-level) is provided.
- UNHCR should continue to provide twice-annual donor visibility reports to PRM in order to demonstrate that it is meeting the requirements agreed upon in the Joint Visibility Strategy.

III. Oversight and Monitoring

Conducting operations consistent with UN humanitarian principles of neutrality, humanity, independence, and impartiality remain shared priorities. Under the Department of State's Federal Assistance Directive, PRM issues voluntary contributions to International Organizations by issuing a contribution letter, accompanied by voluntary contribution terms and conditions. The language includes the following:

"Consistent with numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions, including S/RES/1269 (1999), S/RES/1368 (2001), and S/RES/1373 (2001), both the Department of State (DOS) and the Recipient [UNHCR] are firmly committed to the international fight against terrorism, and in particular, against the financing of terrorism. It is the policy of DOS to seek to ensure that none of its funds are used, directly or indirectly, to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism. In accordance with this policy, the Recipient [UNHCR] undertakes to use reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the DOS funds provided under this award are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism."

In addition, UNHCR will continue to strengthen the Organization's **internal governance and oversight processes**. In particular, the independence of the Inspector General's Office (IGO) has been further strengthened with the first externally appointed Inspector General in 2020. PRM and UNHCR note the sustained and significant enhancement of the IGO's Investigation Service which, as a result of the 2013 review conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office of the European Commission (OLAF) which noted the lack of investigative specialists with professional and trained expertise in the area of investigation. In response, with an aim to strengthen the independence of its work and comply with industry standards, the IGO professionalized its investigative function during the course of the past six years:

- The function was located previously only in Geneva and comprised four non-professional P4 investigators working on a rotational basis. With the support of executive management and to address an increased caseload, the function has progressively strengthened its capacity with 12 professional investigator positions at the P3 and P4 levels, and is present in Geneva and four field locations.
- Accordingly, the number of investigation reports finalized by the IGO increased from 95 in 2016, to 134 in 2017, 144 in 2018 and 164 in 2019; and the number of cases

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transmitted by the IGO to the Division of Human Resources relating to UNHCR personnel for possible disciplinary action increased from 31 in 2016, 61 in 2017 and 64 in 2018 to 85 in 2019. This steady increase, combined with the high level of complaints reported, reflects UNHCR's efforts to reinforce its systems to detect, report, and respond to cases of misconduct.

- The IGO Investigation Service continues to provide presentations to UNHCR personnel on misconduct and the investigative process; and training to implementing partner staff on how to conduct investigations in line with industry standards. In addition, the IGO is currently developing an online training program on conducting investigations on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) for partner staff, which will be finalized in 2020 or 2021, and circulated widely.

PRM and UNHCR affirm the importance of risk management, including increasing coordination across the Organization on contextual, institutional, programmatic, fiduciary, and professional risk management. In order to prevent cases of fraud, mismanagement, and abuse, PRM and UNHCR agree that comprehensive management oversight responsibilities, as well as accountability, need to be strengthened to ensure the integrity of UNHCR's operations. PRM will support UNHCR in its allocation of sufficient human and financial resources to fully implement measures to improve accountability, transparency, oversight, and program management, and will request regular updates on progress through its governing structures. UNHCR agrees to report on such actions to the Standing Committee. Focus areas for 2020-2021 should include, but are not limited to:

- Continuing the strengthening and enhancement of the work of the IGO under the recently appointed, fully independent, Inspector General. Priorities include:
 - Establishing and codifying the role and remit of the IGO's Strategic Oversight function as the vehicle to enhance independent oversight coherence, support learning, generate insight into oversight work and act as an independent support to UNHCR to improve risk management outcomes through inquiries and consultancy advice.
 - Reviewing the integrity response process to support UNHCR's rationalization and enhancement of the overall integrity response processes including reporting mechanisms, program misconduct, misconduct by partners and further refinements to how sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment matters are handled in line with best practice.
 - Implementing recommendations contained in the UNDP-conducted review report of the IGO's Investigation Service.
 - Acting to enable and facilitate the maximum engagement and value from UNHCR's audit service, provided by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), including a review of the OIOS-UNHCR memorandum signed in 2018 and stronger performance oversight and monitoring.
- Strengthening coherence of oversight across different levels of responsibility: 1) field- and country-level, 2) regional and headquarters, and 3) Inspector General's Office (IGO) and other higher-level oversight.
- Continuing to improve the coherence of independent oversight activities and the investigation of misconduct by UNHCR personnel and parties with contractual arrangements with UNHCR, in particular relating to sexual exploitation and abuse of persons of concern, sexual harassment, fraud, and corruption.

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- Continued expeditious and judicious implementation of recommendations from internal audits and advisory services provided by the Office of Internal Oversight Service (OIOS), UNHCR Audit Service, evaluations, and UN Board of Auditors.
- Pursuing various reform initiatives with a view to improving the rationalization of roles between Headquarters, Regional Bureau and Country Offices, improving support to the field, strengthening management capacity, increasing program quality and efficiency, and increasing financial sustainability and accountability of the Organization.

PRM and UNHCR have a zero-tolerance approach towards **fraud and misuse of funds** and UNHCR shall endeavour to ensure that it has all the necessary standards and mechanisms to address and mitigate the risk of fraud and corruption. These include: (a) regulations and administrative issuances and procedures to ensure the ethical behavior of management and personnel; (b) an established Hotline and Whistleblower Protection program; (c) an internal investigation function that is sufficiently resourced and independent; and (d) a system for exclusion from the procurement process (temporarily or permanently) of firms or individuals determined by the organization to have engaged in fraudulent or corrupt activities. UNHCR will:

- Address any allegations or information relating to fraud and corruption in accordance with its own accountability and oversight framework and established policies and administrative issuances.
- The form, frequency, and nature of UNHCR's reporting of credible allegations of fraud and misconduct to be negotiated with UNHCR by no later than December 31, 2020, and reports of incidents of fraud or aid diversion or attempted fraud or aid diversion are in line with OFAC licenses. All reports will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.
- Keep PRM and the Department of State's Inspector General informed about the status and results of investigations related to such events.
- Continue to uphold the Code of Conduct on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) in line with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) six core principles and the 2003 UN Secretary General's Bulletin. UNHCR has a corresponding implementation plan, including appropriate systems to train personnel and investigative capacity to address allegations of misconduct, including PSEA and sexual harassment. In line with donor commitments on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SH), PRM will begin including PSEA and SH language in UNHCR contribution agreements as of FY2021, to be negotiated with UNHCR.
- Regularly update the Executive Committee covering inquiries and main categories of investigations, the number of such types of investigations, the average time to complete investigations, and a description of the related disciplinary action.

PRM funds broad, multi-sectoral, and multi-objective programs through contributions to international organizations (IOs) such as UNHCR. PRM contributions to these organizations not only provide critical core support but also leverage funding from other international donors to address the universe of humanitarian needs. The multilateral context of these programs requires PRM's monitoring to be coupled with strong humanitarian diplomacy with other donors and humanitarian organizations. A key component of PRM's leadership in coordinated humanitarian programming and diplomacy includes **robust monitoring of IO partners**. Through regular reporting and dialogue, including on policy and program issues

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identified in this Framework, PRM intends to continue to monitor closely the Organization's work, and also aims to ensure that UNHCR is strengthening its capacity to monitor its own programs. PRM will continue to share with UNHCR the results of its monitoring and analysis, and welcomes feedback from UNHCR in response to PRM findings and recommendations. In addition to UNHCR's own oversight mechanisms, PRM monitors UNHCR in several ways, including:

- Active engagement at capital-level in UNHCR's governing body, the Executive Committee and Standing Committee.
- Consultations between PRM and UNHCR leadership.
- Field monitoring by PRM regional Refugee Coordinators (RefCoords), political officers covering refugee issues at U.S. Embassies, and PRM program officers, including of UNHCR Regional Bureaus now located in the field.
- Participation in UNHCR's Country Operations Plan exercise at the field level.
- Regular engagement with PRM's Washington-based Multilateral Coordination and External Affairs (MCE) Office and Geneva-based headquarters via the U.S. Mission in Geneva/Humanitarian Affairs (HA), as well as UNHCR's office based in Washington, DC.
- Analysis of UNHCR [Global Appeals](#), [Global Report](#), [Mid-year Trends Report](#), [Global TrendseReport](#), and other annual reports, as well as analysis of UNHCR regional and country updates, factsheets, and donor communiques.
- Review of the audit reports issued by the UN Board of Auditors or by OIOS.
- Reporting from other partners, such as other humanitarian agencies and donor governments.
- Third-party monitoring in settings where PRM staff do not have the ability to monitor programs directly in the field given security constraints.

IV. Communications and Reporting

In pursuit of meeting the goals and achieving the results articulated in this Framework, PRM and UNHCR remain committed to continuous information sharing and cooperation at all levels.

PRM and UNHCR will continue to hold semi-annual Framework discussions on policy and program issues identified in this document. Mid-year Framework discussions will take place in June, while end-of-year Framework discussions will take place in December. PRM and UNHCR will prepare a joint written internal note following the mid-year and end-of-year discussions. In the fall of 2021, the Framework for Cooperation document will be revised to cover 2022-2023.

Reflecting the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship, PRM generally relies on standardized reporting based on UNHCR's reports via governing board meetings and annual reports referenced in Section III. Any additional reporting separate from standardized reporting is negotiated bilaterally with UNHCR through a reporting matrix, with the focus on contributing to evidence-based policies and programs. In addition, UNHCR has an extensive external reporting platform through [Global Focus](#). Global Focus provides up-to-date information organized by populations, operations, themes, financials, and other publications. Through this platform, the public can drill down to specific key objectives baselines, targets,

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year-end reporting, and funding by country operations. PRM receives and thoroughly responds to extensive reporting from UNHCR.

V. Conclusion

In closing, PRM and UNHCR confirm their commitment to remain strong partners to protect and find durable solutions for the millions of refugees, stateless persons, IDPs, and other persons of concern around the world. This Framework for Cooperation is intended to remain operative until December 31, 2021.

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| Carol O'Connell Acting Assistant Secretary Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration United States Department of State | Filippo Grandi High Commissioner United Nations Office of the Commissioner for Refugees |

Date: *December 8 2020*

Date: *10-12-2020*